



MAY, 1890.

THE PASSING OF GENERAL BACON.

AS RELATED BY MASTER MUFFET — FORMERLY OF BABBLETOWN — IN THE YEAR 1684.

'T WAS in September month, o' the year 1676, when I went back a-visiting to Babbletown, from Wyanoke, where I 'd made my home since being a married man; an' 't was likewise i' the very middle o' the hurry-scurry, an' 'wilderment, an' goings on of the Rebellion. Some of you folks will be saying, I reckon, that I did choose time none too fitly for that my holiday visit, but war maketh no such odds as ye might suppose in such matters, unless ye be yourselves 'mongst the fighting ones, when, troth, 't is another thing. Even my wife Patsey, that's a well-behaving woman as any in Virginia, an' never speaketh a word contrariwise, unless she's rough-spoken to — why, she must needs have at me to be putting off the journey. Howsoever, if one giveth in to a woman one day there 's no telling how far she 'll adventure the next. Then my mind 't was set on the notion o' going, 'fore ever that warfare was heard tell of; besides which reasons, there was little a-doing or selling in the shop to keep me busy; wherefore I set off, accordingly as I had planned, an' my gray mare Sally, being a quick, pretty stepper at that time as ever you saw, we made it 'twixt sunrise an' dark easy enow. 'T was peaceable, in sooth, on the road, too; for ne'er a rebel, hair nor skin, did we once see,

nor governor's man neither, — leastwise, ne'er a one with worser weapon than a wagging tongue, belike. Some of such few bodies as I did meet said one thing, some t' other. Nat Bacon was the name to swear by now; then mayhap, with next comer-along, 't would be Sir William Berkeley; notwithstanding, being myself (as I said afore) a peaceful body, I took up cudgels for neither one of 'em, in passing the time o' day. But the changes I did hear rung on those two names when I 'd got to Babbletown!

Now, when a man goeth back to his former neighborhood, where he inhabited as a lad, after settlement ten year or so in other places, he 's like to be asked a-many questions (I take it) concerning of his matters an' fortunes in general. For my part, it seemeth more pest than pleasure to be so turned inside out. I was ne'er one for bragging, tho' I 'd got on i' the world that far a bit better than some who might be named in comparison. Nay, nay; I never looked to have all the talk mine own way, but (truth to tell) as a married man and a housekeeper, with children coming on, I did forethink to be more civilly asked concerning the same. I reckon 't would ha' been warmer welcome for a fiddle-fine somebody, with feathers waving in 's hat and a jingle-jangling spur; but ye see I was neither general

nor captain, nor aught but plain shop-man Muffet (that some called Master Muffet, in civility), an' for these good folks o' Babbletown, they were in a warlike humor that time. Truly, they 'd not done o'er much *fighting*,—as did appear when I made shift to ask,—tho' how they had made out to stay hand from the same, with hot blood so a-boiling inside 'em, is a mystery in nature; yet, sooth (as did no less appear), what was lacking in action they fairly made up in speech, for such a babbling an' chatter, such wagging o' tongues an' clackety-clack, I never did hear the like of.

'T was a fine warm even, a bit past common supper-time, when I rode into the town—with 'most all the townsfolk out o' doors afront of their houses. An' by reason that ten year or so makes a heap o' difference in such as be growing up or getting old, there were some amongst 'em I knew not as well as many I knew; yet old ones, or young ones, or middle-aged, former acquaintance or latter strangers, 't was all one an' the same. "Bacon!" "Bacon!" was the cry at

world like any wild geese in a string, or a game o' follow my leader. An' when I stopped afront o' Tib Tucker's shop, there they came round about me like bees in swarming-time.

Why, then quoth I, "News! What news? (quoth I). Well; there be news a-plenty, I reckon. But as to which be the newer, my news or yours (saith I), in sooth, is yet to be proven i' the comparison."

Then there a-sitting as I was on my mare Sally, with all the folks a-listening for dear life, I said on:

"Truly, I know little about the matter. No fighter am I, nor ever was (quoth I), but a plain shop-keeper, an' 'tender o' mine own business. All I know is this: that there hath been a battle. The noise of it I did hear with mine own ears; an' with mine own eyes I saw the smoke o' Jamestown burning afterward.* Aye, aye; the long an' the short on 't is this (quoth I): Jamestown 's burnt up to ashes; old Governor, Sir William, is chased away, 'cross the water, to Accomack—an' him past seventy year old,



"BACON! BACON! WHAT NEWS FROM GENERAL BACON?"

sight o' me. Who started it, goodness knoweth! But up street an' down it went. "Bacon! Bacon! What news from General Bacon?" For all the

poor soul, with 's head as white as tow; Virginia is turned upside down by these warring gentry, who to my mind be 'most as savage as

* This story deals with the time of what is known as "Bacon's Rebellion," which took place in Virginia, then an English colony, in the year 1676. Sir William Berkeley, the governor of the colony, was thought to be inefficient and was unpopular. Nathaniel Bacon, a lawyer and one of the governor's council, was called to command the colonists who had armed ostensibly to fight the Indians, but really to oppose the governor's policy. The "rebellion" was for a time successful; the governor took refuge on an English vessel, and Jamestown, the capital of the colony, was burned. But Bacon's death put an end to it. A full account of the uprising may be found in ST. NICHOLAS for July, 1882.

those savages they 'gan to fight over in the first place—an' Master Nat Bacon is cock o' the walk, a-riding north an' south over the country, to win folks his own way."

Then they cried out, a dozen or so at once, saying: "Aye, aye! 'T is said he 's in the next county to ours. 'T is said he is at Gloster Court-house this very night. Bacon! Bacon! Bacon! Bacon!"

"Is he so?" saith I. "Then better thank your stars that 't is good ten miles away—an' better stay your shouting till ye know for certain who 's a-going to be hanged for this business. He may be a brave one, your General Bacon, as ye call him (quoth I), but Sir William hath the king to his back—aye, an' the king's armies, to boot—when the time cometh. A pretty piece of work it may be, so far, to your notions; but let 's wait for the end o' 't."

Yet, for all that speech, I might see plain enough how the wind set in their sails. 'T was always more sail than ballast with the people o' that town, an' that 's truth; tho' ne'er will I deny that I was myself born an' likewise brought up amongst 'em, aye, even from a little poor child to a man grown. But did I remain 'mongst them? Nay, not so; not there choose me a wife, neither. Therefore I have a right to speak my mind; tho', for all that, a man hath little good inside him (to my notions) who ever quite despiseth or maketh naught of the place where he was brought up. So, let nobody speak slightly to me of that town's people; yet ye see they were but rustical, being so far away from James City, and a tempest in a teapot is a mighty overboiling thing. As I have said 'fore now, I saw how the wind of rebellion was puffing in their sails, past any one man's breath, contrariwise, to hinder. As for Master Fanfare Joy, the father o' Mistress Peggy Joy, who married Will Steptoe,—and as for Will Steptoe himself,—they had both stood by Sir William from the very first, an' were then gone with him to Accommack; but for the rest o' the town, big an' little, old an' young, "Nat Bacon!" was the word. Each one was a-looking, faith, from his own little loop-hole window (as 't were) to see Bacon do great things. There was old Tommy Grill, with one foot in the grave an' t' other fairly hobbling—there he would be, a-saying

with a wink, "Folks tell how he doth manage his wife prettily." Whereat all laughed, because that old Tommy he 'd always been 'counted a hen-pecked husband, tho' I 'm thinking he did more times than one, whereof ye know, get the better o' his wife, in a cunning way. An' Goody Grill, she crieth out, "Folks say he 'll change the laws—and a good thing 't would be; for of all law ever made i' this world, Virginia laws they be the most outlandish." Which hearing, some smiled knowingly, as guessing the reason o' that speech, for she was ducked (as I did tell you one time), ten year or so back, for scandal 'gainst the law's behest.

So they went on, each one a-fiddling the same tune on his own proper string, an' presently who doth come along down street but Grizzle Pate, that they called "the poetess o' Babbletown."

Soon as I laid eyes on her I knew who 't was, since (Heaven be thanked) there be too few like her i' this world for the same to be easily mistook. Here she cometh, with a ballad-book, or some such trumpery, belike, half open in her hand, an' her head on one side set, an' her eyes rolled up for all the world like a dying duck in a thunder-gust. Then, quo' she, so mincingly, in her little fine voice, "Ah, Bacon! Bacon! Folk say he is the comeliest gentleman that ever was set eyes on."

Now it pleased my heart to give her a sly cut, and I minded well how she was ever took aback when I called her name Grizzle. She 'd changed it to Griselda—or some such ladyfied form on 't—about sixteen year after her christening, an' most o' the Babbletown folks they favored the fool-creature's humor; but she was always plain Grizzle to me. I reckon she 'd ha' been willing to change her last name for a more romantical, if the chance had come round. Howsoever, 't was a cracked pate, in sooth, stuck on her shoulders. Yet, as to what she said that time—well, there be wiser women than she, mayhappen, that measure a man by the same yard-rule. Aye, aye; let but a man be prettily turned on 's outside, an' see how far they 'll be looking within. For my part, I was always well enough content to be as the good Lord did make me. If I be a trifle undersized an' short i' the legs, why, the less cloth it taketh for my rigging out. Green eyes they be

as good to see with as sky-blue, I reckon — and if one's nose turneth a bit upward hath he not the freer play for his mouth? Now, I flatter me that Patsey, my wife, is a well-discerning woman (for the female sort), with some sense beyond her eyesight, and if she be well suited 't is one an' the same to me. As for Grizzle Pate, poor soul I could never a-bear the look of her; an' how some folks could call her pretty-faced passeth my notions. She was no common, comforting good to anybody in this mortal world. A high romantical way she had with her, had Grizzle, an' concerning the poetry-making, she could rhyme "fire" with "lyre," an' "love" with "dove," an' "wail" with "jail," as prettily as the best on 'em, I do reck — who am, however, no proper judge in such matters. Howsoever, I did catch her up finely on her own ground that even, for, saith I to her on a sudden, so catching her unawares, "Grizzle," saith I, "what rhymes with Bacon?"

Then she looked up an' she looked down, an' she looked around about. "Bacon?" quo' she, a-thinking (yet she could not think of an answer to that question). "Bacon! Bacon! what rhymes with it?" quo' she; an' there she stood foolishly, not knowing what to say.

Whereupon spoke I, "No, Grizzle, thou canst not rhyme it if thou soundest the round O, quality fashion. But if thou callest it trippingly, after the manner o' common tongues, like mine an' thine, Grizzle, why, I myself can find you a rhyme, easy 'now. So—list you now (quoth I), make sure this *Bac'n* shall be *taken*, in 's net that he 's now a-spreading. He 's dreaming finely now (quoth I), an' mayhap King o' Virginia in his mind a'ready; but from his dream he shall *awaken*, when his castle i' the air is *shaken*, an' when he 'll be *braken* on the wheel, belike, or hanged as high as Haman. So, will he not *save* his bacon, mark me (quoth I), but there be all the rhymes you 'll want—aye, an' foretelling ones at that—to start you ballading for a month o' Sundays."

Which hearing, she tossed her head so airily, an' some o' the rest there hard by did look nigh mad enough to cut mine off—but old Tommy Grill he laughed a bit an' vowed that I 'd the best on 't.

Now, it did make me right mad, in sooth, to

hear these deluded ones so a-siding with rebels an' traitors 'gainst old Sir William, an' he that was the King's own lawful governor — so high in place and honor this forty years — so warred upon in his old, ancient days by a young upstart boy, and all because he was a bit slower, maybe, than younger blood might ha' been, about fighting the Indians. "Kill them! kill them! an' let me do it my way," saith Master Nat Bacon; an' few then would deny 't was the thing to do with an Indian; howsoever, "Wait a bit," saith old Sir William, "an' let me do it my way." For all his seventy year he 'd a toughish will o' his own. So 't was old steel 'gainst young fire, an' pull Dick pull Devil betwixt 'em. For my part (being a peaceable man), I did always take sides with Sir William. He was a civil-mannered gentleman, as ever I did see, for all his grand, high way an' his fine velvet dress. I mind well one time, when I lived in Babbletown years ago, how I rode with a letter from Master Fanfare Joy to his Honor, Sir William, at Greenspring Manor-house. 'T was a fair, fine house, outside and in, an' ne'er was I kinder welcomed in my next neighbor's — an' that 's truth. First they had me into the big dining-room, mighty grand an' fine, with a picture over the mantel-shelf o' the first King Charles a-getting his head cut off; an' there Sir William himself bade me sit down 'fore ever he brake seal of the letter. So there — whilst that he read it slow thro' his spectacles — there sat I on a cushioned, carven chair, the same as any lord. An' when that reading was done, an' the answer writ thereto, what doth his Excellency but thank me graciously, with "An' I hope you 're in good health, Master Muffet," quo' he, a-bowing, i' the court fashion, belike. So whilst we were there, hobnobbing together (as 't were), me an' the Governor, — with him asking me a-many questions about matters in our parts, — in cometh my Lady Berkeley, an' lo! he must needs go commending me to her for an honest man.

"'T is Master Muffet, Frances, my dear (quo' he), a very honest man."

An' then, saith I, — a-making my manners, — "Aye, aye, my Lady. I have never stole aught, so far, your ladyship; but there 's no telling, faith! what we may come to yet, afore we die."

Whereupon his honor did seem mightily

tickled; but my Lady ne'er cracked a smile. Surely, it taketh your born gentleman's tongue to say "my dear" with that soft-spoken a turn o' voice; an' for her ladyship, I bethink me, it must take lifelong top-breeding to teach how to hold one's head so far on one side without getting a crick i' the neck — or keep one's eyes so nigh shut without the lids a-coming together. A fine lady she was, to be sure, but I did find out 't was time to go, soon after her coming in. Sir William, he graciously walked out with me an' showed me his orchards, for 't was in April month o' the year an' fruit-trees all a-bloom. Aye, aye; 't was a fine, pleasant place, for certain. Folks said how 't was mightily wasted afterwards, when General Bacon an' his rebels made headquarters there, after they 'd burnt James City an' chased Sir William away to Accomack. I did hear tell how that the soldiers did use to go parading round, a-making mock in some o' my Lady's gowns, stays, tuckers, an' what not, that she 'd left behind her in hasty setting-off — with hair-powder on their heads an' smelling bottles in their hands. Howsoever, I misdoubt that tale, for I do not think they would be so outlandishly a-going on.

Well, well; that next day after I did get to Babbletown was a warm one as to natural weather, and a warmer one still as to expectation 'mongst the folks o' that place. There was I (a peaceable man as any in this mortal world), caught i' the frying-pan, an' not knowing but what next minute it might be clean into the fire. Such a talk an' brabble did they keep on, concerning Master Nat Bacon — such a wonderment what he 'd be a-doing, or which way a-riding next. In sooth, there was he, all that long day thro' (as we did hear after time), at Gloster Court-house town, fairly pleading his very heart out, all to no purpose. You see, he had looked to be finely holpen by the rich gentlefolks o' that town. Ne'er a finger had they lifted for Sir William, but ne'er a finger, neither (for all that), would they lift 'gainst him for General Bacon. Neither fish, flesh, nor good red herring were they, in that business (as the saying goeth, and as General Bacon himself told 'em), or else too prudently mindful o' their goods an' chattels to risk meddling one side or t' other. 'T was told that General Bacon had counted

'em for certain 'mongst his favorers. Howsoever, he was mightily mistook in that notion, as did appear — for 't was neither men nor money, help nor promise, comfort nor countenance, could he get out o' them. First, he did make 'em a long, fine speech (as I did hear tell afterward), an' then a-waxing hotter, mayhappen, as he perceived them cold, lo! he falleth to pleading, with that winning tongue of his that 't was commonly said could tie more knots o' mischief in five minutes' space than any other in Virginia might fairly straighten out in a twelvemonth. Yet he could not, with all its winningness, tie up those men o' Gloster to his cause. "Let 's wait till we hear from England," said they, so wisely nodding one to t' other; an' so they steadfastly stuck it out, 'gainst all his prayers. Whereupon, at last, he fell into a rage, an' with some hot flout upon them for coward knaves (or the like), did turn his back on that place.

Now, the Babbletown folks — tho' they knew naught concerning all this till afterwhile — they had somehow caught a notion (in sooth, I know not why or wherefore) that he 'd be coming their way. Every which-a-way I went all that day long, a-walking round the town, 't would be necks craned out o' window, and eyes a-gazing t'wards the Gloster road.

So it passed, till even came, an' still no General Bacon, an' still they kept on to the same tune. In sooth, so mad it did make me (a-coming at last upon some twenty people, or so, in the middle o' the street), with their Bacon this, an' Bacon that, an' Bacon, Bacon, Bacon — so mad it did make me that I boiled over unmanerly an' brake out upon them.

"What!" crieth I; "will ye still be at it? Can ye eat this bacon that ye be crying up? Will it nourish you — bone or body? A pretty price ye 're like to pay for 't, and a merry feast ye 'll have on 't when the king's army cometh to pick the bones — some fine day, from England. Now, heaven knoweth (quoth I), 't is for no end o' mine own I would advise you. Yet, to be sure, a man might take shame, in day to come, a-telling when one asketh him, mayhappen, 'Prithee, where were ye born an' raised?' — a man might take shame to say: "'T was i' that town where all the folks were afterward hanged.'

Howsoever (quoth I), that 's neither here nor there — an' for your own good, I do advise you, let well enough alone."

Now, at that speech they did look 'mazedly after me as I walked away; but I saw 't would make little difference in their foolish minds. An' pretty soon thereafter who doth come along in front o' me—with her eyes rolled up to skyward, and a paper in one hand—but Grizzle Pate.

Then I spied somewhat writ upon the paper, and a notion caught me on the sudden to see what 't was. So, thinks I to myself, how the wisest of men saith, "Answer a fool according to his folly"; an' quoth I, "Good day to you, Grizzle. An' what have you there?"

Whereupon she came down out o' the clouds, an' fell a-smirking so bashfully, with head on one side. An' first she said 't was but a small thing, next to nothing at all, an' not worth any-

body's note; yet, for all that talk, I might discern she was a-dying to show the same; an' presently (sure enow) she let out how 't was a poetry-ode she'd been a-writing in honor of General Bacon.

Now, when that I asked her to read it out (for I was right curious to hear the stuff), lo! she did thus begin:

"O Muse! descend—" an' here she was caught with a cough, being tickled in her throat, with her own fool-vanity, belike. "O Muse! descend—" saith she, an', fetching her cough, was a-going on; howsoever, I did want to sense the

meaning on 't as we went along, an' hang me if I knew what that outlandish word might mean. So I made bold to ask her, "What was a Muse?"

Now, poor Grizzle! I'm half thinking she did hardly know much concerning it herself. Mighty red she got—but she went on to say,



"SO I MADE BOLD TO ASK HER, 'WHAT WAS A MUSE?'"

glib enough, how that a Muse was a kind o' flying woman, that poets an' such always called upon to come down from the sky, or wherever she inhabited, to help 'em with their rhyming business. Then I looked to skyward and all around, on hearing this, but no such a creature did I see. "I have seen many a fly-away woman," quoth I; "but never one flying down from the skies. Prythee, Grizzle, where is she?"

Howbeit, what doth the silly wench then (a-laughing at my plain question as 't were the most outlandish thing in this world) but say that nobody did ever see this flying woman at all.

"'T is only in a mindful sense, Master Muffet," quo' she; "for you neither see her with your eyes nor hear her with your ears. 'T is all inside your heart, as 't were," quo' she; an' then she went on to say, in a manner of confidence, that truly (for her part) she did never feel herself much beholden to that lady; notwithstanding, 't was ever the right way an' the most truly poetic (as everybody did say), to begin with somewhat or other about her.

So then she went on :

"O Muse! descend; descend on flapping wing!
'T is Bacon's praise — great Bacon's name I sing.
O Bacon! let heroic verse tell o'er
How all past use thou turnest hind part afore.
Thou art not stuck, but stickest, and all thy foes
In pickling brine of tears thou dost dispose.
In smoke of their own town thou smokest them well;
Our state thou curest — ill humors dost dispel.
O'er crackling blaze thou 'rt neither boiled nor roasted —
Thyself 's the fire at which the tyrant 's toasted.
O Bacon! —"

Now, how much more o' the stuff she 'd there writ down, i' faith, I do not know; only I heard no more then, for just as she spake that last word, the sound on 't was taken clean out of her mouth — as 't were — by every tongue in Babbletown. Soon as I heard that screeking I did guess who must be coming now. Zounds! what a scramble and a tumbling out o' doors, heels over head, was there, to be sure! with everybody, big an' little, singing out "Bacon! Bacon! Bacon!" at top voice. Everybody was a-running one way, t'wards the main middle street o' the town. "'T is he! 't is he! 'T is General Bacon himself!" crieth one to t' other. There came old Tommy Grill, hobbling along, as eager as any young sixteenner among 'em; an' there came Goody Grill, fairly puffing for haste. So I went along with the rest of 'em to see what was toward now; an' Grizzle — there was she too — with her poetry-ode in hand, an' her high romantical way, a-sailing nigh after.

'T was nigh on to sundown by this while, so that one might smell the supper a-getting in most houses as we went a-down street; but I reckon a many folks in Babbletown did eat burnt bread that even. If there was one housewife 'mongst 'em all that stayed indoors by her bake-stone, my name 't is not Thomas Muffet.

VOL. XVII.—67.

There we all went, a-down the crossway, hurry-scurry — an' just as we fetched to the main street the great wonderful show came along.

Now, 't *was* General Bacon himself, sure enow, and others of his company, a-riding back to York River by this nigher road than they 'd afore taken in going northward. Mayhap twenty gentlemen, or so, they counted — all a-horse-back, prettily armed with sword an' pistol as ever ye did see, an' finely set off with spurs a-jangling an' plumes in their hats a-waving as they went. Heaven ha' mercy on us all! It maketh me right sad this day to think how many on 'em there faring so gallantly did swing from the gallows-chains in less 'n three months' time. Aye; for all they were but rebels, an' the law must be well minded, one could not help some pity — an' that 's truth.

Now, as for him, their leader, Master Nathaniel Bacon, I did know (some way), which one was he that time, the second I clapt eyes on him, there a-riding i' the midst. He was a smallish, slim gentleman, yet most comely-shapen withal, and a graceful rider as ever backed horse. That much there 's no denying. His face, it might ha' been well-favored enow, in pleasant humor. 'T was fair in feature an' shaping as any you 'll find, but zounds! of all the black looks that ever I did see he looked the blackest then. Ye see, let alone the passion of 's mind that time, the fever that 'fore long carried him off untimely was a'ready raging in his veins. His eyes they were blood-shotten an' the brows above 'em knitted, like any woman's in a rage. Surely he must ha' been turned 'gainst everybody and everything that even. His lips they 'd a mocking set. Some o' his comrades did off with their hats an' bow to the folks as they passed along — but as for Master Bacon, he never made sign or spake word. 'Way up street a-front of 'em, on one hand an' t' other, 't was lined with the townsfolk, and as they passed along the people did run out i' the roadway after 'em; so that there was all Babbletown (so to speak), like a flock o' sheep getting bigger every minute, a-running at their horses' heels.

Everybody hushed speaking, or crying "Bacon! Bacon!" after the first clamor on 't, for all were straining to hear what word the General

might be a-going to say next. I 've a notion that Grizzle was half-minded to 'gin reading out her poetry-ode, for I saw her look at the paper an' fetch breath hard, now and again—but she 'd ne'er quite face for 't, belike. General Bacon he looked mockingly, first on one side, then on t' other. Twice or thrice he half-oped his mouth, and (I promise you) everybody fairly held breath at that; but still no word he spake. I did hear one o' his comrades ask another, saying: "What is the name of this place?" An' when he made answer, "Babbletown," Master Bacon he smiled to himself in a right curious fashion, but yet he said nothing at all. Mayhappen if he 'd seen more able-bodied men, fit for soldiering, amongst 'em there round about, an' fewer old, ancient gaffers, women, an' lads, he 'd ha' been the more civil-spoken.

Now, those poor shuttle-wits of Babbletown, that had been so a-singing that high and mighty gentleman's praises to the skies, they were a bit took a-back by this behavior—as one might plainly see. Still they kept on after him, and I with the rest, clean to the town's edge; for all kept on a-thinking somewhat must be surely coming next minute; an' so it did come, forsooth, tho' 't was somewhat vastly different from aught they 'd run out to hear or see. Well, as I said afore, we went on alongside of him, an' hard after, as nigh as we might—to the open, outside the town; and there, lo! what doth he do, on a sudden, but rein in 's horse short.

Then everybody else stopt too, at that, with mouths agape and eyes a-gazing. There they stood, whiles he looked round about on all. He smiled to himself right curiously at sight o' Grizzle and Goody Grill, one so fat and t' other so lean, a-standing side by side; an' Sam Crook, too, hard-by, with his hair blown back, clean forgetting the matter o' his ears. His face (I do mean General Bacon's face), 't was like a mocking woman's, or a lad's—half mad, half merry in deviltry. He oped his mouth, an' he spoke one word: "*Buzz-z-z*," saith he; just this way an' this loud betwixt his teeth—yet loud enow, I warrant, for them there a-listening to hear. Aye, aye; 't was a civil, pretty thing to say, an' mighty fine behavior for a general, as

they called him. What he meant by the same, or whether he did so mean aught of anything at all—goodness knoweth! Now, I do think 't was surely the most outlandish turn i' this world. Can you sense meaning in *buzz*? Can you make head or tail on 't? Nay; 't is no sensible word, out of any spelling-book, at all. Ne'er another word he spake—if one may call that a word properly. "*Buzz-z-z*!" quoth he, as one may mock back, mayhappen, at a swarm o' bumblebees; so with that he spurareth his horse, and off he goeth a-down the road, with his troop—clattering behind him. An' that was the first an' the last we ever did see of the great Master Nathaniel Bacon.

Well, well, well! what a take-down it was, to be sure! I needs must laugh a bit in my sleeve as we all went 'long back into the town; but I was half misliking it, too—such a slight as 't was to the place where I 'll ne'er deny I was born an' raised. They never said much at first, being (I reckon) well-nigh past speech with the amazement of this set-back. One thing I remember, for certain; namely: that all the women-folks had found out in that passage how General Bacon was no more comely than civil-spoken. For my part, I did think his looks well enow—yet as for the civility, that was another matter. His manners might ha' been better for mending, and that 's truth; and if handsome is as handsome does (as the old saw runneth) 't is no wonder you never could pay anybody in Babbletown after that time to say General Bacon was aught else than the ugliest man i' this mortal world. There 's no mistreatment that giveth such offense as to be made nothing of at all; yet I reckon the Babbletown people were the rather holpen than hurt by that slight—and one thing I know for certain, they were civiler to a plain man the day after it so befell than they 'd been the day afore.

Aye—well! 't was a bad, black business, that rebellion—and a bad ending it came to, for both sides. As for the silly ones at Babbletown they 'd ha' been willing enow to catch on if General Bacon had held out a finger, I reckon; but I be right glad he did not, for 't would ha' gone 'gainst the grain with me, some way, to hear they were any of 'em hanged.

Alice Maude Ewell.